

Minutes of Meeting
CRIME PREVENTION COMMISSION
Newton Police Department – The Community Room
7:00pm – Wednesday – November 17, 2010

Commissioners Present: Frank Wolpe (Chair), George Cullen, Marc Epstein, Leonard Fisher, Bernard Goulding, Marjorie Kagan, Benjamin Rubin, Fred Winer

Commissioners Absent: Lois Bruno, Frances Shaer, David Winer, Colleen Rosenbaum, Scott, Rosenbaum, Richard Wing

Ex-Officio Members, Present: Bruce Apotheker

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Matt Cummings, Jeff Silton

Regular Invited Guests Present: Richard Catrambone, Debra Darcy

Regular Invited Guests Absent: Ellen Manning, Richard Dyer

Guest Speaker: NPD Safety Officer Jo Gourdeau

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Frank Wolpe, Chair with his observation that the primary focus of the Commission for a while will be one of the Mayor's top priorities, an effort to make all modes of travel safer in Newton. Frank read from portions of the report of "Recommendations from the Newton Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), dated September 27, 2010. He asked the Commissioners for a thoughtful expression of their "concerns and recommended solutions", with emphasis upon solutions. One careful caveat, he suggested, will be to refrain from proposing things that cost a lot of money since our City, like most other cities across the nation, has little money for new projects. Consequently, any proposal will inevitable have to withstand cost/benefit analysis!

To open the discussion, the Chair noted one local travel "concern" deals with safety at crosswalks. So he suggested that we might encourage the City to have many more painted crosswalks, some even elevated, with more moveable cones that say "State Law Yield within Crosswalk". These might be put in places where there are now no stop signs or traffic lights.

Next, NPD Safety Officer Jo Gourdeau, as the invited guest, spoke impressively about her role as safety officer and her experiences in dealing with traffic safety. Along with the Chair, the two of them led a discussion about proposals that might be reported

back to the TAC, through its Sub-Committee on Outreach and Engagement. The following proposals emerged from that discussion:

1. A campaign should be undertaken to remind young people that driving a motor vehicle, riding a bicycle or coasting on a skateboard is a privilege, not a right.
2. Bicycle riders at night should be required to have “lights” on their bicycles and wear “brighter clothing”, subject to NPD fines for violation. For young people, outreach should be achieved through the school system, particularly, in classrooms using teachers, to spread the message. For adults, outreach might be achieved through the usual media for public service announcements. Since there is now a MGL allowing the citation of bicycle riders, it should be enforced in a visible fashion with \$35 fine for violators.
3. Driver education should be expanded in the schools to include skate boarding and bicycling.
4. Helmets should be required for skateboarders as well as bicyclists. Parents should be fined for not providing a helmet.
5. More unmarked police cars should be used for traffic enforcement.
6. Crosswalk stings should be employed and advertised to apprehend and discourage violators. This could contribute to a positive behavior modification.
7. Streets in certain areas need to be better illuminated at night.
8. Since school campuses tend to be heavily congested areas, there needs to be more extensive parking restriction near public schools since young drivers are inexperienced at moving safely through such a “target rich” area. Crosswalks need to be better monitored by more crossing guards and/or meter maids because of the visibility problem with small children afoot. Incident reporting by school officials that is fact-based, not blame-fixing, also needs improvement.
9. In school assemblies and parent/teacher (PTO) meetings, there should be more watching of the movie “Smashed” to alert people of the extreme danger when a car becomes the most dangerous weapon young people will ever handle.
10. More marked and/or elevated cross walks and moveable cones should be accepted as a basic public safety requirement.
11. Repeat offenders who have been convicted of driving under the influence should be more carefully monitored by the increased use of ignition locks.
12. Since too many parents are unaware of the proper installation of their “child booster and/or car seats”, there should be more “Certified Trained Installers who

are NPD officers. Certifying one officer, who in turn trains others, would be a good start. Such training is available through the National Highway Safety Administration.

13. The issue of school-bus seat belts should be revisited.
14. A campaign should be undertaken within the schools to strongly remind students of the statutory prohibition against underage cell phone use and texting while operating a motor vehicle.
15. All two-wheeled forms of motorized street transportation should be considered for license plating. Apparently, there are some that do not now have the requirement.

We then moved to a discussion of other Agenda matters. The minutes of the October 20, 2010 meeting were unanimously approved without modification. Lt. Bruce Apotheker presented his monthly crime report, especially motor vehicle breaking and entering; and George Cullen told about how we published our Halloween Safety Tips for Newton Residents on the website called <http://newton.patch.com>.

The Chair then reported that NPD Lt. Bruce Apotheker had been nominated for the 2011 Human Right Commission (HRC) Award. The decision about who will get the award will be made sometime next year. He will be among a number of other candidates so it is clear that he will be in most impressive company. Just being nominated, therefore, is an honor and achievement. The Statement of Nomination read, in part as follows:

“Good public servants really do matter. Accordingly, this nomination is for a diligent policeman whose impressive successes over a twenty-seven year period have been for the exclusive benefit of our neighbors in Newton.

“The Newton Human Rights Award is designed to recognize an individual who, by his or her efforts, has improved the quality of life in Newton by promoting greater understanding and appreciation of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability or ancestry, or by working to reduce discrimination in areas such as education, employment or housing”.

“For those among us who are not already fully familiar with Bruce’s contributions, the following synopsis might be useful. Since 2005, he has served as the Civil Rights Officer for the City of Newton. As such, he professionally oversees the investigation of all hate incidents, domestic violence, elder fraud, and serious juvenile misbehavior.

“Perhaps, now is finally the time for a citizen’s group in the often-cited Safest City in America, to recognize one of its own, one of its finest. What better group than the Human Rights Commission to single out one of our NPD leaders, the one

whose job it is to safeguard human rights, the one who does that job so very well. What is more, in honoring Bruce, we will also be thanking our Newton Police Department for what they do to keep us safe and protect our human rights. What a wonderful gesture! Yes, a grateful public is important.”

Turning to a different topic, member discussion ensued about the virtues of having Commissioners who were individual-community-liaison persons with volunteer responsibilities versus operating through sub-committees. The consensus was that liaison people would be a better approach so the Chair so ruled. The following persons stepped forward to become liaison volunteers. George Cullen – Elder Affairs; Bernie Goulding – Domestic Violence; Fred Winer – Auxiliary; Marc Epstein – Child Car Seat Safety; Rich Catrambone – the public schools; Scott Rosenbaum – private schools, colleges and universities; and Debra Darcy – the courts. Each of them will report, from time to time, at subsequent meetings about their activities; and they will ask for help to advance whatever causes we collectively undertake in those areas.

The next meeting will be on December 15, 2010. On a motion made by the Chair, and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.